

Federal Grant will Support Job Training, Career Counseling
June 30, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC — Today, U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) announced Louisiana would receive a \$10 million federal grant to provide employment assistance to about 4,500 workers affected by the BP oil disaster in the Gulf. The Louisiana Workforce Commission will use this funding to help workers with retraining and re-employment assistance while they seek reimbursement from BP. Services funded by the grant money may include skills assessment, basic skills training, individual career counseling and occupational skills training.

“We are all looking forward to the day when Louisiana’s fishermen, rig employees, small business owners, and other workers can get back to doing the trade they love,” said Rep. Melancon.

“But until life returns to some semblance of normal for the people of the Gulf Coast, this funding will help workers get the job and skills training they need to find temporary employment in other fields. I know our workforce commission will be able to use this jolt of resources to help Louisianians get through this disaster and prepare for the future.”

The Louisiana Workforce Commission will use this funding to assist workers in the following parishes in Louisiana: Acadia, Allen, Assumption, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangeline, Iberia, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne, and Vermillion.

The BP oil disaster has impacted three major sectors of Louisiana’s economy – fishing, offshore energy production, and tourism – affecting thousands of workers.

Last month, Congressman Melancon secured a fisheries disaster declaration from the federal government, paving the way for financial assistance for fishermen and small businesses in the seafood industry. Melancon began [calling for the fisheries assistance in April](#), when he told the head of NOAA’s Fisheries Service and the Secretary of Commerce that the oil intrusion resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil rig disaster would likely damage the fragile habitats on which Louisiana’s fishermen, oystermen, and shrimpers depend.

To reduce the long-term economic harm of the oil disaster, Congressman Melancon has also been pressing the federal government to [end the moratorium](#) on deep-water drilling and clarify new regulations for shallow-water drilling that have created a “de facto” moratorium in the Gulf. The offshore energy industry is a major economic engine for south Louisiana, providing thousands of jobs and supporting numerous locally-based service companies in Congressman Melancon’s Congressional district.

Congressman Melancon has also called on BP to suspend bonus payments to top-ranking executives and apply the money toward helping Louisianians impacted by the oil spill in the Gulf. In a [letter to BP](#) Chairman Carl-Henrik Svanberg, Congressman Melancon noted that BP CEO Tony Hayward’s 2009 bonus of \$3 million would cover the cost of salaries for 50 offshore

workers who have lost their jobs due to the moratorium imposed because of the oil spill.

Congressman Melancon represents in Congress the areas of coastal Louisiana most directly affected by the oil leak, including Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary and southern Jefferson Parishes. The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana's Third Congressional District.

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